DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OF PORTO RICO
Office of the Commissioner
San Juan

Circular Letter No. 287
February 28, 1906.

To Superintendents,

Gentlemen:-

Teachers' Institutes will be held this year on a slightly different plan from that followed in former years. As planned this year, each institute will be held for one day only and will consist of two-day-sessions and an evening meeting. Attendance will not be absolutely obligatory on all teachers but you are authorized to excuse only those whose attendance would require an undue expenditure of time or money, and any teacher excused will be expected to conduct his classes as usual.

With few exceptions, the Institute in each district will be in charge of a superintendent from another district as shown on the accompanying schedule. As the Department has no special fund at its disposal this year from which to pay the expenses of the institutes. Superintendents assigned to lead institutes in other districts will be expected to pay their travelling expenses from the regular monthly traveling allowance. Messrs. José Janer and Francisco Zuazaga of the Insular Normal School, both of whom are widely and favorably known for their knowledge of local conditions and interest in educational progress will acompany the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner respectively and speak in the evening meetings. Besides the addresses by the Commissioner and Mr. Janer or the Assistant and Mr. Zuazaga each superintendent should make special efforts to secure a good local speaker, preferably not directly connected with the school work. In all cases, men of distant standing and influence should be secured if at all possible. These three addresses together with an introductory speech by the President of the School Board or Alcalde will be sufficient for the evening. You are urged to arrange carefully the details of the evening meeting and to attempt to secure a full and representative attendance of the public.

It is believed that it will be best to arrange for the discussion of four subject in the two-day-sessions. The Medical Association of Porto Rico has requested that a place be given on the program in each institute to a member of their body who will speak on Anemia and its treatment and they have kindly offered to furnish the speaker in each town. If an official program is printed, this number should be given as "Uncinariasis, su profilaxia y su tratamiento."

For the three subjects dealing with school work it is thought that the best results will be secured by following a plan somewhat similar to that followed in the recent Superintendents' Conference. Subjects should be assigned to three teachers who should be directed to prepare their articles and submit them in writing to the superintendent at least one week before the date of the institute. Then for each paper two other teachers should be designated to prepare short supplementary discussions. The principal speaker on each subject should be allowed two minutes or thirty, and each of the supplementary speakers not more than ten minutes.

In the hope of aiding you and your teachers in this matter, outlines have been prepared on four copies any three of which may be selected for discussion if you so desire or other topics may be substituted by you if you prefer. Suggestive outlines on the four topics accompany this letter. A table showing the dates, speakers and leaders for the institutes is also enclosed. The institute director should be informed as to the definite program as soon as possible so as to enable him to make any preparation he may deem advisable.

Very respectfully,

(Signed) Roland P. Falkner
Commissioner of Education.

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